President: Where will the honourable member have it?

Mr. M. Govindan: I would like to have it today or early tomorrow.

Mr. Kottur Kunjukrishna Pillai: I second it, Sir and suggest that it may be taken up immediately and finished.

Mr. C. V. Chandrasekharan (*Pro-Vice-Chancellor*) Sir, there will be only two speakers for that demand, Mr. Govindan and myself. Mr. Govindan can tell me all that he has to say in my office.

Mr. Kochikal P. Balakrishnan Tampi: Sir, legislative business is left out in tomorrow's agenda. Is it that Legislative business is not going to be taken up tomorrow?

President: The House came to a definite conclusion that we should take it up at 2 o'clock tomorrow. That arrangement stands.

I shall call upon the honourable member in charge of the demand for the uplift of backward communities to move his demand first and then we shall go on with Electricity and Telephone, Agriculture, Industries, Commercial Transport, Ayurveda, Forests, Currency and Mint. I suppose that meets with the desires of honourable members.

Mr. Kottur Kunjukrishna Pillai: Yes, Sir.

DEMAND XVIII—UPLIFT OF BACKWARD COMMUNITIES.

Mr. C. V. Chandrasekharan: Sir, I move for a grant of Rs. 41,278 under Demand XVIII—"Uplift of Backward Communities."

Mr. M. Govindan: Sir, I am thankful to Government for the great help that the community whose welfare I am concerned with as the President of the Kerala Harijan Sevak Sangh is deriving from the work that the Department is carrying on. Its various activities are described in the report that has been supplied to us. It appears from that report that a sum of Rs 1,71,926 has been spent last year, *i. e*, 1114, for this work through various departments. When I complained at the time of the General Discussion of the Budget that Rs. 40,000 now budgeted for the uplift of the backward classes was not enough, that it was very inadequate, the Pro-Vice Chancellor was good enough to point out to me—and I have not forgotten that either—that there were other departments through which the community are deriving help. It is through the Educational Department chiefly that the communities are helped. Perhaps the easiest way to remove the disabilities of these backward communities is for the Government to help them to become literate and to learn their various ways of earning livelihood. The Government

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has been kind enough last year or the year before to give a scholarship on the recommendation of the Sangh to a graduate belonging to the Parava Community for prosecuting his studies in the Tata Graduate School of Social Work at Bombay. That young man has completed his education now and the Sangh has employed him on a salary of Rs. 75 per mensem with a good travelling allowance to enable him to travel throughout South India and study the conditions of all the backward communities and to prepare a work on the subject which may be treated as an authority. Arrangements have been made to render him proper help in the various places in South India. He is now in Tamilnad and he is doing good work. It will be gratifying to this House and to the Government to learn that the young man's career has been successful and that the results of his labours may be useful to the backward communities.

Now as regards my complaint. I complained that the amount, although very considerable—Rs. 1,71,000 is a considerable amount indeed—is hardly sufficient for the work that has been taken on hand. Rural uplift alone will consume a considerable sum if sufficient attention is to be paid to that work and real good work done. Concentrated effort is necessary for the purpose and if we spend some little money here and some little money there, my impression is that real good result may not be attained. That is in regard to the rural reconstruction. In this connection may I point out, Sir, that of the Rs. 50,000 that had been budgeted last year, only Rs. 25,000 had been spent and that the balance has lapsed. I submit that it is not budgeted under this item It has been budgeted under some other item. My submission is that if for rural uplift the whole amount had been transferred to this department, then all the amount would have been spent and real good work would have been done.

Mr. M. K. Nilakanta Aiyar: Sir, this amount of Rs. 50,000 was intended to meet the expenditure on account of the village unions and panchayats. These were started late and hence the whole amount has not been spent.

Mr. M. Govindan: I quite see, Sir, that it was intended for village panchayats. But may I complain further that the year before also Rs. 50,000 had been budgeted and it was not spent fully.

Mr. M. K. Nilakanta Aiyar: Sir, I may point out to the member that contribution to village panchayats will depend on the amount which the panchayats themselves will collect.

Mr. M. Govindan: I give it up lest I should lose my case on that account. (*Laughter*)

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There are several other items in which expenditure is very necessary but has not been provided for. One conspicuous item I may mention here and that is one for which I have always been troubling the Pro-Vice-Chancellor and he is almost promising even now, so that if I trouble him once more I may be able to get him to comply with my request. So it is not in a spirit of bitterness that I complain.

President : That is well understood.

Mr. M. Govindan : It is now more than two months since the schools opened. The pupils in the third and fourth classes alone are now getting text books according to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor. But the boys studying in the higher classes require more help particularly because the communities to which they belong are very poor. But it so happens that the Government fixed upon the third and fourth classes simply because I made the complaint. I complained, when I was always asking for compulsory education, that there was so much of educational waste due to the fall in attendance in the third and fourth classes. Perhaps Government thought that it will be a good remedy to prevent these education being wasted, to help the poor boys in the third and fourth classes. I am thankful to the Government for that. But with regard to the higher classes, the poor boys now get no help and their numbers may not be so high but the need is even more and the books have not been given to them yet. I wanted that something should be given out of the provision for this year for that purpose. Now that we have come to the very end of the year, it may be possible for Government to give a considerable sum at the commencement of the next year. In fact all the data necessary for ascertaining the amount required have been collected by reference to various departments and everything is ready. The only thing that is now required is that the help should be forthcoming and it has to come in time. Otherwise Head Mistresses and Head Masters of the various schools whom I have requested not to send out the children may go back to their usual ways of sending out boys and girls for not bringing books, and denying then the benefit of education. So I submit, Sir, that that is an important item of expenditure which has to be attended to immediately.

Then there are so many other items in which expenditure can be increased. I may refer to the total number of pupils belonging to the backward communities here as well as in the sister State of Cochin. Of course I do not say that in the matter of General Administration Cochin is ahead of us or anything like that. Cochin is always following us. But in this matter she is appearing to be more sympathetic towards the backward communities than Travancore. Here for a population of 8,18,000 whom we are serving the expenditure

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is only Rs. 1,71,000. But for a population of 1,24,300 Cochin is spending Rs. 87,000 in one year and Rs. 82,000 in another year, that is Rs. 5,000 less for the subsequent year. They are making progress every year. Perhaps they have exhausted their energies in other directions in order to improve the condition of backward communities a little higher. The expenditure is more than doubled in that place. The disparity between the condition of the various communities occupying this ancient land is most noticeable for any stranger on a reading of the Annual Report. Some are so poor, so backward that they cannot fall into line in a homogeneous community. Therefore the most important social work that has to be done here is this uplift-work. Therefore I earnestly request the Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Government to show a more sympathetic attitude to this question and provide ample funds, either by diversion or otherwise, for the development of the condition of the student population.

Mr. C. V. Chandrasekharan: Sir, the honourable member Mr. Govindan has raised what may be called 'hardy annuals' and he complains about them to me in my office, in my house and now, here, in the Legislature. Mr. Govindan and I are old friends and there is no bitterness on his side: there is much less on my side. But let him compare the present with the past, let him use the historic sense. What was the condition with regard to the uplift of backward communities five years ago? What was it ten years ago? And, what is it now? Having made enormous strides in this respect, Mr. Govindan suggests intensive work. Well, Sir, that was the programme which was chalked out about three years ago under your chairmanship. A very representative conference of all Heads of Departments, only three years ago, decided upon having a regular plan for a systematic intensive work in certain selected localities and centres. Apparently, Mr. Govindan's appetite grows on what it feeds on, and the more we do, the more he asks for, and he forgets that there were years when nothing was done in this respect. When was the time we had a Harijan hostel? There was none until two years ago. First we gave small grants and after two years, we have taken over the whole hostel and are spending about five thousand rupees on the maintenance of it. That, Sir, is the position.

Mr. M. Govindan: May I correct my friend. A sum of Rs. 4000 alone is spent, Sir.

Mr. C. V. Chandrasekharan: No, Sir. On account of the increase in the price of provisions, we had to increase the grant by Rs. 500 and, we have provided nearly Rs. 5,000 in the budget for the next year. And, similarly, grants of books too. Until

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three years ago, no books were given free to the third and fourth classes. It is only three years since we decided to give all Harijan school children such concessions. This is a new item. Once having started it, we had to keep it on, from year to year, and the difficulty is, we cannot find funds for everything. Sir, no man working in this line can fail to realise "the little done, the undone vast". I know the problem is enormous, both in magnitude and complexity. As far as I can see, we require enormous funds to tackle this problem fully and effectively. Government have so many things to attened to having taken up many new items of work. Increased funds are not readily available and progress is conditioned by the inevitability of gradualness. Sir, I am rather amused at the comparison made between Cochin and Travancore. The honourable member says we are of course advanced in all respects except in this particular respect. Well, Sir, last night I saw in the paper that the municipality at Ernakulam made a rule that barbers' shops should serve customers irrespective of caste. But the Government came down upon this go-ahead municipality with a heavy hand. "Here is the municipality attempting to introduce social reform in the guise of exercising its ordinary powers." They have vetoed the municipality's decision and have said that old customs should be respected. That is the sympathy towards backward communities and towards Harijans displayed in Cochin.

Mr. M. Govindan: May I ask the member, whether the barbers are a backward class?

Mr. C V. Chandrasekharan: Barbers should serve all customers, whether they are of superior caste or inferior caste. Harijans I presume, Sir, require a shave occasionally.

Now, Sir, in regard to this particular item of grant for books which Mr. Govindan has been urging, the facts are as follows. Occasionally when we have additional funds, we give a grant of Rs. 5 or 6 for books to each pupil in middle schools and Rs. 7 or 8 to each pupil in high schools. There is no rule or continuity about it. It all depends upon whether funds are available. Last year, funds were available and a sum of Rs. 800 was spent by way of casual grants in this way to high school and middle school pupils. This year, it was not possible to give this grant owing to lack of funds. It was not possible during 1115 to give this casual grant for high school and middle school pupils. If in 1116, we have additional funds Rs. 6,000 more has been granted by Government. I will certainly try to help these poor deserving pupils in English and Middle Schools.

President: Before putting this motion to the vote, I wish to make one or two observations. It is the object of Government to afford continuous assistance to the backward communities, if

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[President]

possible through the instrumentality of these communities themselves. For that purpose, it has been emphasised by Government, whenever deputations have approached Government and put forward claims of special groups of backward communities like Cheramars, Sambavars, Pulayas, and Parayas and so forth, that the time has come when they should get together and establish their own Sanghoms or Samajams or associations, which will in turn, after being organised, send representatives to a Central Body composed, as far as possible, of members of all backward communities. The Central Committee should register itself under the Indian Companies Act or some similar enactment and if that were done, Government would only be too anxious to render substantial help by making lump grant to that organisation. I have mentioned this to several communities and I am making this offer public here and I trust, that, during the coming year such a step will be taken. The reason why I am mentioning it in this connexion is that, earnest as the advocacy of Mr. Govindan is, strenuous and successful grumbler in a legitimate sense as he has been and will, I trust, continue to be, nevertheless, various communities have come forward and alleged that such help as is now given is not as widely distributed as it should be amongst the deserving communities. In order to avoid a sense of invidious differentiation, it has been the object of Government to co-ordinate their activities. Such a co-ordination will be of great use to them, not only in the matter of getting grants from Government but for many other purposes, including their own uplift. I trust that Mr. Govindan will take upon himself the task of bringing about such a result. Then, there would be the advantage that the supervision of the Protector of Backward communities would get to be progressively lesser and lesser and the communities themselves would be getting a periodical grant from Government just as the University gets which they will spend according to the wishes of the communities themselves. I trust that that idea will be taken up and next year, if possible, instead of having this kind of sporadic criticism, it will be possible for the Protector of Backward Communities to say that he will exercise, only a benevolent supervision coupled of course with close financial scrutiny of expenditure over a body which will be self-contained and representative of all the backward communities.

The question before the House is that Government be granted a sum of Rs. 41,278 under Demand XVIII—Uplift of Backward Communities.

The Demand was put to vote and carried.

The Demand was passed.

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